
REPORT OF AGENT IN UTAH.

REPORT OF UINTAH AND OURAY AGENCY.

UINTAH AGENCY, *July 20, 1893.*

SIR: In accordance with instructions in office letter of June 15 last, I have the honor to herewith submit to your office this my fourth annual report of affairs connected with this agency, as agent of the "Uintah and Ouray agencies consolidated."

I took charge of these agencies on July 1, 1890, and have been but a little more than three years in charge; yet in this brief time I think I can show as great progress in the condition of these Indians, as to their mental progress and material improvements on the reservation, as can be shown in the United States Indian service. My time being cut short one year by Executive order, there are some measures of improvement projected, and which I had hoped to complete during my term, that are not yet finished; yet, I believe I have taught these Indians the difference between progress and stagnation, and my great gratification is that I am succeeded

by an agent in the person of Maj. James F. Randlett, of the Ninth United States Cavalry, present post commandant at Fort Duchesne, who is in thorough sympathy with and will push to early completion all the work begun.

The school work of this agency has shared in the progress of all Indian schools under the vigorous school policy of Commissioner Morgan, yet the fine and commodious buildings erected two years ago are not quite filled. The Ute has much yet to learn in his estimate of schools, especially the White Rivers.

I must express my gratitude at the quite liberal manner in which I have been sustained at the Indian Office by authorities and funds to carry out the many improvements which I have thought necessary for the progress and welfare of these Indians; but I have no platitudes of fulsome praise to lavish on men simply because of being in high authority, some of whom in the past three years I have found to be quite as "human" as Indian agents. I have endeavored to be as economical in the expenditure of public funds as was consistent with the needs of the work, yet have not been parsimonious nor stinted in my asking. As a result I am proud to say that every feature and branch of the work of these agencies is in a prosperous condition, and as a reflex result the Indians show a marked advance in the practice of civilized pursuits.

UINTAH AGENCY.

Reservation.—Uintah Reservation contains about 2,000,000 acres of as fine land as lies in this intermountain region, the Uintah Mountains bounding it on the north, and the Book or Price Mountains on the south. The agency is beautifully situated about 10 miles south of White Rocks in the Uintah Mountains (whence the post-office here takes its name), on a table-land sloping to the south, and in summer is a bower of green, by reason of the many clear mountain streams permeating the slope, and running off to the south to form the Uintah River.

Its origin.—This reserve was set apart for the perpetual use of these tribes by President Lincoln in an executive order dated October 3, 1861, and subsequently approved by four several acts of Congress, the latest of which bears date May 24, 1888; and it is occupied by the two tribes of Uintahs and White Rivers.

Population by tribes—

	Uintahs.	White Rivers.
Males.....	243	203
Females.....	205	175
Total population.....	448	378
Males, 18 years and over.....	125	110
Females, 14 years and over.....	140	107
Males, 6 to 16 years.....	74	58
Females, 6 to 16 years.....	64	57

Schools.—The schools of this agency have been well sustained the past two years. They are Government boarding schools. The enrollment has been 76 and the average attendance for the entire ten months 39. The tendency to drop off from school attendance during the two months of May and June, also the heated part of September, is so marked that indeed I am inclined to think that a school term of nine months is all that should be required of these Indian pupils, and that it would result in more good than the ten months' term.

Since my last report a fine building, containing carpenter shop, play room, and storeroom, has been added to the school premises; also ice house. The grounds have been leveled and graded and sidewalks laid, all of which labor has been done by the superintendent and industrial teacher, with the help of the boys, which has saved cost and adds greatly to the convenience and appearance of the premises.

The fruit orchard set out two years ago has made excellent growth, although it suffered some by reason of winter killing. I have great hopes that this will make a good fruit region, and that the Indians will take great interest in the matter in the near future.

By authority I have caused the survey, profiling, and platting of a line for pipes to connect a very fine spring (about 2 miles away) with the school and agency buildings, together with estimates for the building of the same. This is now in the hands of the Indian Office, and I hope will receive its favorable consideration.

Gristmill.—Last summer I had erected, by authority, a fine gristmill building adjacent to the sawmill on this agency. The contract for furnishing a first-class set

of roller works for this mill was let to the Turbine and Roller Mill Company, of Dubuque, Iowa. The machinery has just been received at the mill, and will be set up and in running order immediately. This will furnish these Indians what they have long needed, a chance to get their wheat made into flour of first quality, and greatly encourage wheat-raising among them.

Annuities.—Large annuities of clothing, blankets, shawls, gingham, hats, boots, shoes, hose, various cooking utensils, etc., are issued to these Indians each year, together with cash annuities and grazing funds. The cash distribution per capita last May was for Uintahs, \$13.91, and for White Rivers, \$5.47, the difference being on account of the "Meeker pension" being still paid out of the White River funds.

Farming.—A marked improvement in farming is very noticeable. More extended acres are being brought under the plow, and closer attention to details is being had. From 50 to 75 tons, mostly tame, hay is sold at Fort Duchesne each year, and several hundred bushels of potatoes.

Grazing Lands.—The matter of grazing cattle by white men on this reservation has long been in an unsettled and unsatisfactory state to all concerned. Two years ago I proposed the matter of leasing all surplus lands (grazing lands) to one or more parties, who should give bonds for the payment of the rental, as well as for the faithful performance of the terms agreed upon.

How it was done: By authority of the honorable Commissioner of Indian Affairs, I fixed the limits of the land, and advertised it to be let to the highest responsible bidder, after the usual manner of such public advertising; the Department reserving the right to reject any or all bids. In this way some 675,000 acres of the west end of the reservation (commonly called Strawberry Valley) were offered; the bids being opened on June 22, 1892. In my report of the bidding to the Indian Office I expressed my disappointment at the small offers, whereupon the honorable Commissioner directed me to accept informal bids, which I proceeded to do. The Indian Office having received a bid of \$7,100 per annum from Mr. Chas. F. Homer, of New York, and submitting the same to the honorable Secretary of the Interior, was ordered to direct me to enter into contract with Mr. Homer for the lease, which I did, after the usual forms in such cases, to begin June 1, 1893, and to run for five years. Mr. Homer is now in full possession of his lease, having paid up promptly his first year's rent on the 1st of June last.

The law under which this grazing lease was made (viz, act of Congress of February 28, 1891, section 3 thereof), and which was decided to apply to this reservation by the Assistant Attorney-General of the Department on the 11th of February, 1892, and by the honorable Commissioner of Indian Affairs in a letter to this office dated March 1, 1892, also provides for "leasing for mining purposes not to exceed ten years," whereupon Mr. W. A. Perry, of Denver, Colo., being a mining expert, drew up a form of lease, in due form of law, for certain asphaltum and elaterite deposits, known to exist along the southern line of this (Uintah) reservation, and in open council held for that purpose on the 7th of February, 1893, submitted the same for the consideration of these Indians, and secured their almost unanimous consent to the same; and by direction of said council the lease was signed by some twenty chiefs and head men. This action was done by them, subject to the approval of the Indian Department and the honorable Secretary of the Interior, who have the case yet under advisement.

It is difficult to see any good reason either in law or justice why the will of these Indians so clearly expressed should not be granted and the lease approved. But it meets with violent opposition on the part of persons interested in the asphaltum business in this valley. If this lease were approved, with the grazing lease already accomplished, their orchards, the fine new flouring-mill, and the fine new school buildings, I should consider these tribes on the high road to prosperity and civilization.

Crimes.—Some petty crimes have occurred, generally the result of drunkenness (which is all too prevalent). These have usually been referred to an arbitrating committee of three head men and their decisions are very just, as a rule.

Whiskey selling.—An unfortunate condition of the liquor-selling question here is the fact that a V-shaped strip of land lying immediately between these two reservations, and no larger than half a township, was set off a few years ago as "public domain" in the interest of a few who had located asphaltum claims there; and upon this "public land" are located saloons selling liquor under county license, where for all purposes of debauching and selling liquor to Indians they might as well be allowed to choose their location anywhere on either reservation. A "test case" in the United States district court at Provo some twelve months ago and taken from these same "saloons," proved that a single Indian's evidence was not sufficient to convict. Therefore as long as they sell to but one Indian at a time they may and do sell with perfect "impunity."

It is my deliberate opinion that the "segregation" of this strip of land for purposes of "private gain" was the most unfortunate and damaging act that has ever occurred in the history of these agencies, considered in the light of the moral welfare of these Indians.

Allotments.—No allotments have as yet been made on these agencies of "lands in severalty."

Dances.—These Indians still love the horse racing, the card playing and their dances, but in this they differ but slightly from more civilized people. These so-called "dances" of these tribes are mere imitations of their former "orgies." Shorn of about all their barbarous features they are but the comparatively innocent reminiscences of their "long ago" heathen "rites," and stand to them in the same relation that amusements do to people of all degrees of enlightenment. With all their seemingly superstitious amusements I have not observed that they have as yet descended to the level of the "fistic arena."

Industries.—With all their fun-seeking and their hunting disposition these Indians show yearly a decided advance in industrial pursuits. They will do all the daily labor and hauling that can be furnished them and at reasonable rates.

It is seriously to be regretted that no church or missionary have as yet had their attention attracted to the wants of these tribes as a missionary field. A Sabbath school has been faithfully maintained by the school superintendent and other helpers among the employés.